

Living Spring Montessori

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY293804
Inspection date 30/01/2012
Inspector Martha Darkwah

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Living Spring Montessori Nursery was registered in 2004. The setting is located in a church hall in the London Borough of Brent. The nursery serves the local and wider community.

A maximum of 72 children may attend at any one time. Children attend full-time and part-time for a variety of sessions. The nursery opens for 48 weeks of the year, each week day from 8am to 6pm. There are currently 62 children from eight months to five years on roll. Of these, children aged three and four years receive free nursery education.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 22 members of staff, of these 17 work directly with children and all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The dedicated staff team in this nursery efficiently support children's needs in a safe and secure child centred environment. The nursery has established a very effective partnership with specialist advisors, parents and carers and their involvement is warmly welcomed and highly valued. The nursery recognises that each child is unique and devises educational plans and learning opportunities to effectively meet the individual needs of each child overall. Children are making good progress in their learning overall given their age and individual starting points. There is a good capacity for improvement and the management team and staff have a positive vision to ongoing development of the nursery.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- further promote children's enjoyment of rhymes and stories by extending the range of compact discs and tapes for children to listen to
- further develop and extend children's skills in information and communication technology (ICT) by offering a wider range of ICT, such as computers, to support their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding children is a high priority in the nursery. The manager and staff have attended recent, relevant training to keep their knowledge up to date.

Safeguarding policies are in place, are effective and are clearly understood by staff members to protect children. Robust recruitment procedures are in place and appropriate checks are carried out on all staff to carefully assess their suitability and qualifications. Additionally, the provider ensures ongoing suitability of staff is monitored through an effective appraisal system which identifies individual training and development needs. As a result, staff members effectively support and include all children. Risk assessments are carried out to assess the safety of the indoor and outdoor area and for outings. Staff conduct daily visual checks to ensure that the indoor and outdoor play areas are safe for the children. Staff and children practice an emergency evacuation of the building regularly.

A comprehensive set of policies and procedures is shared with parents and these are reviewed regularly. The provider has addressed the recommendations set at the last inspection to benefit the children. The staff team have undertaken a detailed self-evaluation and have identified areas that they wish to develop, demonstrating a commitment to making ongoing improvements. The manager and her team continue to drive improvement through appraisal and continuous training. The provider/manager has embarked on training on an Early Years Professional degree status.

The nursery resources are extensive and of good quality. There is low level shelving in all rooms which enables children to self-select from a good range of resources covering most areas of learning both indoors and outdoors. Children have access to a wide range of toys that promote positive images of diversity. Staff members develop themes and projects to enable children to learn about other cultures, continents and the differing lifestyles of people from various backgrounds through dramas and planned activities. As a result, children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and its cultural and religious differences. Parents are encouraged to share their cultures and beliefs with the nursery, for example, children have enjoyed dragon dance as part of their Chinese New year celebrations.

There are good systems in place to identify children's starting points, and planning, observation and assessment are used well. The system for identifying the next steps of children's learning is fully effective. Samples of children's work are kept in their individual folders. These include photographs of a number of interesting activities that children engage in, both in and outdoors. Overall, the learning environment is very well organised and the rooms are bright and welcoming.

The setting is highly committed to working in partnerships with others and takes a lead role in establishing effective working relationships. Effective channels of communication between other practitioners and professionals are well developed. Relationships with parents and carers are highly positive. Parents have nothing but praise for the nursery and report that their children are making good progress.

Parents reveal that the staff team is the key strength of the nursery as they are 'very caring' and 'quickly get to know their children well'. Parents feel involved in their children's learning and receive lots of verbal information about their children's well-being and learning progress. Regular communications enable parents to become actively involved in the nursery. Parent conferences provide time for children to show their parents what they enjoy doing and affords parents time to read and contribute to their children's learning journals.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are well settled in the nursery; they are confident and have a strong sense of belonging. Staff explain their expectations and offer meaningful praise with lots of encouragement. Children are learning to take responsibility by putting their things away when they have finished playing and are beginning to become independent when pouring drinks at snack and serving their food portions at lunch time. Babies have the opportunity to feed themselves with support and relish the opportunity to explore the food with their hands and spoons.

Children find out about and identify the uses of items of some everyday technology and programmable toys to support their learning. They use microphones to record sound and music and use toy cash registers to develop mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems as they engage in role play in the play house set up as a shop. However, resources for some information and communication technology (ICT), such as computers, to support children's learning are not readily available.

Children learn practical life skills such as mirror cleaning, stool polishing and washing and cutting fruits for their snacks. They choose when to snack in cafe style with their friends and tidy and wash up using suitable child-sized equipment. Children spend time in the well-arranged book corner reading alone and sharing books with others or re-telling the stories through the use of pictures. Children are able to listen to stories on compact discs, although there is only one to choose from which limits their rhyme and story listening experiences. Children make good progress in their communication skills and their understanding of number and problem solving. Some children can count up to 10 and beyond, they can count aloud and give the correct names to displayed numbers. Children are involved in mark making activities indoors and outdoors, that develop their pencil grip, which helps them to develop their pre-writing skills. Overall, resources and activities contribute effectively to children's future economic wellbeing.

Children are encouraged to understand how to keep themselves safe as they play with a range of equipment. For example, they put their chairs under the table when they get up and put their mats and resources away when finished to reduce trip hazards. Children develop a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles. A dedicated cook prepares a good range of tasty, healthy meals for the children in a clean, orderly kitchen. The children eat their meals with obvious pleasure, serving themselves and with many having second helpings. They enjoy fresh fruit snacks

and they have drinks to hand throughout the day. Older children understand why they should wash the fruits they select for snack each day and enjoy the opportunity prepare the fruits, cut and arrange them attractively on serving plates to share with their friends.

The experiences provided, resources available and interaction from staff help to ensure children develop good skills for the future. Children are increasingly independent and exercise appropriate amounts of control over their own behaviour by being well mannered, polite and courteous.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met